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ABSTRACT

This report on vocational education and training (VET) reform in Latvia is one of a series of country reports by the European Training Foundation on the reform process in partner countries. Chapter 1 provides basic data on the country. Chapter 2 describes the present situation and recent developments in VET. It covers main features of the educational system, strategic objectives for VET, and legislative framework. It looks at developments in these areas: administrative structure and decentralization; finance; adaptation of training to changes in the economy and society; identification of skills needs; quality standards and qualifications; promotion of continuing VET; social partners; involvement of enterprises in VET; equal opportunities; access to training; and vocational guidance and counseling. Chapter 3 describes international assistance and cooperation, including the European Union's Phare (VET reform) and Leonardo programs. Chapter 4 covers these challenges and further needs: skills needs analysis, institutional arrangements, and qualifications and training methods. Chapter 5 suggests these priorities for further assistance: reinforced legal framework for VET; VET research network; social partner involvement; restructuring of the rural network of VET schools as "integrated institutions"; national guidance and counseling system; and a national standards system. Appendixes include key indicators, VET system diagram, legislative framework, responsible bodies, and international assistance. (YLB)

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COUNTRY REPORT

Latvia

October 1997

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European Training Foundation

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The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Community which works in the field of vocational education and training in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States and Mongolia. The Foundation also provides technical assistance to the European Commission for the Tempus Programme.

European Training Foundation

Vocational Education and Training Reform in

LATVIA

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication

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FOREWORD

This report on vocational education and training reform has been produced by the European Training Foundation based mainly on information provided by the national Observatory. The report consists of a condensed description of the present situation in vocational education and training and analysis of the main challenges facing vocational education and training reform in the country. It also outlines possible priorities for future assistance to sustain and further the reform process. The report will be updated in 1998.

In order to provide accurate, up to date information on the progress of reform, a network of national Observatories has been set up by the Foundation in partnership with the national authorities of the partner countries. These national Observatories, mainly hosted by existing organisations involved in the reform process, gather and analyse information on vocational education and training issues according to a common framework agreed with the Foundation. The Observatories are also responsible for the dissemination of their outputs. Since 1996, national Observatories have been set up in 22 partner countries eligible for support under the EU Phare[1] and Tacis[2] programmes. The Foundation aims to set up Observatories in all remaining partner countries in these regions by the end of 1997.

This report is one of a series of country reports and factsheets which the Foundation is currently producing on the reform process in each of the partner countries. The Foundation intends to produce these documents on an annual basis. These reports are available from the Foundation and can also be consulted on the Foundation's Home Page on the WWW. Enquiries regarding the reports should be addressed to the Information & Publications Department at the Foundation.

Please note that more detailed information on vocational education and training reform issues in each country is also available directly from the respective national Observatory. Please refer to the list of national Observatories enclosed in this report.

Torino, October 1997

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1 In the Phare area, Observatories have been set up in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia

2 In the Tacis area, Observatories have been set up in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russian Federation (Moscow and St Petersburg) Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

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Since independence in 1991, Latvia has successfully launched a widespread reform programme in order to re-establish the country's independence, to strengthen and extend democracy and pluralism, and to re-orient the country towards a free-market and international economy. Latvia signed the European Association Agreement in June 1995.

There is a considerable difference between urban and rural areas in terms of density of population, number of enterprises and unemployment levels. In some regions up to 25% of the local population are job-seekers.

1. BASIC DATA

Geographic area	64,600 km²
Total population / population density / growth:	2,479,900 (1995) / 38.4 per km² / growth -1.1% (1996)
Urban Population:	68.9% (including Riga 34%) (1996)
Age structure	0-14: 20.45% / 15-64: 66.15% / over 65: 13.4%
Ethnic profile	Latvian: 55% / Russian: 33% / Belorussian: 4% Others: 8%
Languages	Latvian (official), Russian
GDP-ECU/GDP per capita-PPP-ECU/growth:	3.4 Billion (1995) / 3,159.4 (1995) / growth 2.5%
Inflation	958%(1992), 26%(1994), 16.2%(1996)
Privatisation of state enterprises:	82.6% of state-owned enterprises have been privatised (1994/September 1996).
Unemployment: (ILO definition)	18.3 (1996)
Education budget	5.2% of GDP (1995). Vocational education and training: 0.6 % ofd GDP

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2. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features of the system

Vocational education and training in Latvia starts at the age of 15/16 after 9 years of compulsory schooling. Programmes last between 1 and 4 years.

Vocational education and training is provided through four types of programme:

- Basic vocational education : providing basic vocational training to those who have not completed basic schooling by the age of 15; 2 years duration;
- Secondary vocational education: admission after completion of 9 years of education; providing 2 streams:
  - (i) without general secondary education; 2 and 3 years duration;
  - (ii) both vocational training and general secondary education, 4 years duration; eligibility for admission to higher education;
- Vocational post-secondary education: after completion of general secondary education, 1-2 years duration;
- Specialised secondary education: providing vocational training and general secondary education; 2-3 further years after secondary school; 4-5 years duration leads to eligibility for admission to higher education.

The vocational education and training system is centralised in Latvia. Schools can partly decide the content of the curricula according to pupils' interests, school capabilities, pedagogical qualifications and educational standard requirements.

The number of students has gradually decreased in vocational and technical schools during the last few years. Enrolment was 55,312 students in 137 schools for 1992/93 and 43,170 students in 121 schools for 1995/96. Each year approximately 26% of students leaving compulsory schools enter vocational training institutions and 12% enter secondary specialised institutions.

The number of students who ceased attending school during the 1995/1996 academic year was 5,521 (3,327 male, 2,194 female) equivalent to 13% of vocational education and training recruitment.

In Latvia ,vocational education and training is also available in Russian in some schools.

2.2 Strategic objectives for vocational education and training

In December 1995 in its plan of action the government formulated the following strategic objectives for initial vocational education and training:

- the harmonisation of national educational standards and EU qualification standards
- the development of new teacher training programmes and teaching materials
- the application of new methods of teaching and student evaluation and the updating of equipment
- the training of school managers to ensure the correct delivery of new educational programmes
- support in appropriate institution-building as part of the vocational education and training system reform.

Specific objectives for continuing training development were not formulated.

A working group set up by the Ministry of Education and Sciences (MoES) is currently drawing up plans for an initial vocational education and training system. They will be based on the EU "White Paper" and experiences resulting from the implementation of Phare vocational education and training programmes and will include a strategy paper for the development of a post secondary vocational system.

2.3 Legislative Framework

The current education law, adopted in 1991, regulates the education system as a whole. It determines the rights and duties of the state, municipal governments, public organisations, professional corporations and associations, private persons, educational institutions, parents, pupils and students as well as determining the types and levels of education and educational institutions. This law was intended as a legal framework with a series of laws regulating individual types of education. It does not formulate the strategic conditions for adapting the vocational education and training system to a market economy. A higher education law was adopted in 1995.

A law which deals specifically with vocational education and training is in preparation. It will co-ordinate the legislation of different policy areas including employment policy and social policy.

Different laws regulate social protection, social insurance for unemployment abd entrepreneurship. (see annex 3)

2.4 Developments in specific areas

2.4.1 Administrative structure and decentralisation

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for overall education. It sets regulations and guidelines for all educational institutions in Latvia. It co-ordinates the development of curricula, determines the proportion of general education subjects and is responsible for legislation regarding all professional training institutions. The vocational education and training department in this Ministry validates both qualifications and the new vocational education and training programmes, assesses existing institutions and gives accreditation to the new ones.

Vocational education and training responsibilities are divided between several ministries (education, agriculture, welfare and culture). Each Ministry has its own Department of Education and Centres for Professional Education have been established at the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Welfare to support the curriculum development process and ensure the compatibility of new curricula with existing Latvian requirements.

The sectoral ministries determine curriculum standards for professional subjects in the schools under their authority, administer funds and create legal documents which regulate issues specific to these schools.

The government has decided to set up a Vocational Education Development Programme agency to ensure the correct implementation of the vocational education and training reform. This agency will be partly funded by Phare, donors and the state.

The Ministry of Eduation and Science's Department of Continuing Education is responsible for continuing training.

The government is actually planning to restructure the administrative organisation from 26 to 5 regions. They also plan to keep basic vocational education and training responsibilities at the Ministry, reduce the number of vocational education and training schools in rural areas, and create Regional Education and Examination Centres.

2.4.2 Finance

The vocational institutions in Latvia are mainly financed by the state. So far, no structure has been created to collate the funds used by the different ministries.

There are two types of financing in place: "basic" financing and "development" expenses. Basic financing covers the maintenance of educational institutions and salaries of teaching staff. It amounts to 97% of the educational budget.

Development expenses are meant for strategic investments and any implementation and innovation carried out in the educational sector.

Donor contribution in 1996 was 14% of the overall vocational education and training budget.

Adult education is financed as follows: state expenditure for unemployment retraining - 47.5%, tuition fees paid by the learners - 38%, funding from firms and organisations 10%, municipal budget 2.2%, other sources- 2.2%.

No specific contribution of enterprises is existing at this moment.

2.4.3 Adaptation of training to change

Vocational education and training reforms in Latvia are at the initial stages and rely heavily on Phare vocational education and training programmes which focus on initial and higher vocational education and training.

The main objectives of the vocational education and training reforms have been to modernise curricula, to up-grade school equipment and to train teachers and school managers. These activities have been implemented with the support of Phare programmes and other donors. In some areas, action has been taken to ensure that the educational programmes correspond to the needs of labour market and that qualifications are suitable. Curricula for 10 occupational profiles have already been developed through a pilot scheme.

2.4.4 Identification of skill needs

Labour market demand for skilled personnel in key sectors is increasing and even though the workforce is generally highly educated, many of the new skills required are still lacking. Existing educational and occupation classifications are becoming increasingly obsolete but new occupations have not yet been introduced into the existing classification system.

The Professional Education Centre of the Ministry of Education and Science has started to involve social partners in order to analyse the evolution of skill needs and to draw up conclusions. After the conclusions are received the qualification requirements will be revised according to proposals from the branches. But activity in this area has only just started. A regular review and exchange of expertise is needed to develop and implement new curricula which are in line with market economy occupations.

2.4.5 Quality standards and qualifications

The Ministry of Education and Science distinguishes 4 educational levels of professional activities in 320 distinct professional profiles. They do not correspond to the international classifications such as the International Standards Classification for Education (ISCED). The Department of Professional Education in the Ministry of Education and Science accredits the new curricula developed by public or private institutions.

The Professional Education Centre (PIC) organises curriculum development for basic and secondary vocational education in co-operation with schools. It also accredits courses provided for the unemployed. PIC is also involved in the theoretical part of professional examinations.

The Latvian authorities intend to set up an accreditation system at regional level in Regional Education and Examination Centres. They also plan to develop a quality assessment system in co-operation with social partners.

2.4.6 Promotion of continuing vocational training

A draft concept for continuing training has been created and is being assessed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Despite limited resources, 25 regional Adult Education Centres have been established across the country in conjunction with the Latvian Adult Education Association (NGO). The Adult Education Centre regulations have been finalised. They include the implementation of Adult Education Centres at existing educational institutions. Small-target financing still needs to be delegated and functions defined. There will be a horizontal information exchange between educational institutions, pedagogic and organisational qualification improvements, development of teaching materials and the distribution of programmes.

The 1992 regulations on "unemployed vocational training and re-qualification" clarify that the Ministry of Welfare's State Employment Service is responsible for registering, offering guidance, training and re-qualification to the unemployed. Two thirds of expenditure are spent on the training and retraining of the unemployed. According to the figures of the State Employment Service, in 1995 7.6% of the total number of unemployed people attended training courses.

The private sector offers other kinds of courses which provide non-diploma oriented education. In-company training in the newly established companies is being developed but as yet no official form of quality control exists.

The content of continuing training course programmes for teachers focuses mainly on teaching methodology and evaluation.

2.4.7 Social partners

The Association of Free Trade Unions and the Confederation of Employers have been set up and according to a legal framework for organising social dialogue (from the Law of Labour, Law on Mutual Contracts, Decree on the Tripartite Consultative Council). They participate in the creation of new legislation in the field of social policies, discuss the minimal monthly wage and take part in drawing up specific employment regulations. They will also be able to participate in the working group to elaborate the new law on Vocational Education.

At local level, tripartite bodies have been organised in order to analyse employment problems, develop training for the unemployed as well as identify regional development.

The present Phare vocational education and training programme and the Phare Staff Development programme are playing an important role in stimulating the involvement of the social partners in national vocational education and training policy developments.

2.4.8 Involvement of enterprises in vocational education and training

Structured co-operation between schools and enterprises is lacking. So far, some schools have tried to make close contacts with possible employers for their students and to organise practical training.

A new form of collaboration with enterprises has been created by the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Enterprises offer short term business and management education in their training centres and work closely with different international organisations.

The Phare programme for Latvian Business Education Reform (BERIL) also foresees the participation of employers in the design of new curricula.

2.4.9 Equal opportunities

Statistics show that women are less represented in the labour market (48.3%). The rate of unemployed women has increased considerably in the 25-29 and 40-44 age groups. Specific measures for retraining women have not been undertaken as yet.

2.4.10 Access to training

The Russian minority enjoy basically the same rights as Latvians, with special schools which cater for their language needs especially in the eastern region of Latvia.

There are also professional schools for people with special needs (including special schools for children from families with problems).

However, some problems in the area vocational education and re-education of handicapped people still exist and the level of unemployment among this population is very high - about 85%.

Two vocational education institutions exist for prisoners.

2.4.11 Vocational guidance and counselling

Six Professional Career Selection Centres are under the authority of the Ministry of Welfare's Labour Department. They are responsible for vocational guidance in Latvia with the main objective to give advice to students and the unemployed on educational and professional matters.

The Professional orientation concept for the Republic of Latvia was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in November 1994. It is still necessary, however, to establish a guidance organisation acting at all levels of the educational system.

3. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION

3.1 Phare Assistance in the field of vocational education and training

International support is provided mainly by Phare (5.5 MECU-1994/1996). The Phare programmes aim to support the initial modernisation and reforms of the vocational education and training system in the areas of curriculum development, teacher training, upgrading of teaching equipment, partnership with EU schools, education policy development and the dissemination of results. One of the programmes refers to the post secondary area in business and adult education.

In the short term, (1997/2000), the Ministry of Education and Science will seek support from Phare for the vocational education and training 2000 reform programme which will be built on results of reforms introduced during the past few years. It aims at supporting the further development and implementation of a secondary and tertiary education and training system.

Phare is also promoting social dialogue and the training of policy makers through the Phare Staff Development and Phare Vocational education and training Programmes, and supporting the Labour Market survey prepared by the national statistics office.

3.2 Preparation for Leonardo

The implementation of Leonardo in Latvia is just beginning. The government has already agreed to participate in the programme. A specific budget of 83,000 ECUs has been allocated for 1997. The new Vocational Education Development Programme agency will host Leonardo activities. A series of preparatory measures supported by the Foundation will be organised during 1997. Latvia will fully participate as soon as the European Association Agreement has been ratified by EU Member States. Some necessary decisions by EU institutions (EU council of Ministers, European Parliament and Association Council) must also be taken on the basis of a proposal from the European Commission.

3.3 Other Assistance

Major bi-lateral co-operation projects exist with i.e. Germany, Denmark, Canada and the Nordic Council to assist in or develop projects for staff training, a business education network, the creation of a training centre of metal technology, training for the unemployed and retraining for adults, teacher training systems and the improvement of education in the commercial field.

4. CHALLENGES AND FURTHER NEEDS

A coherent policy for initial and continuing vocational training in line with EU standards is a key issue for the country. However, in order to develop this policy, a legislative, institutional and financial framework needs to be established.

It is important keep vocational education and training institutions in rural areas in order to guarantee equal opportunities for students and to continue to offer education in isolated places.

4.1 Skill needs analysis

A systematic analysis of labour market needs is not taking place in Latvia. It is necessary to (i) collect and analyse information on regional and sectoral development to give schools the chance to adapt their programmes accordingly and reinforce their collaboration with local SMEs and (ii) undertake vocational education and training-related research.

4.2 Institutional arrangements

Conditions for social partner participation in workforce skills identification must be specified. Although the legal framework already foresees their involvement, they are not fully in a position to play an active role in the continuing reform process because of lack of organisation and expertise on vocational education and training issues. At this stage it is necessary to develop structures for organising their role at the national, regional and local levels, and furthermore assist social partners in enhancing their awareness, knowledge and analytical capacities regarding vocational education and training. The vocational education and training law must carefully regulate their involvement and also insure necessary resources both for initial and continuing training and place fund-raising on a more regular footing.

In order to build a coherent vocational education and training system integrating both initial and continuing training, relations between the Ministry of, Education and Science and the Ministry of Welfare need to be reinforced. This could be achieved by making better use of resources, ensuring the compatibility of qualifications, and adapting standards to regional and local specifications. In this respect, a rational use of the existing vocational education and training schools, particularly in rural areas could lead to autonomy for schools at local level. Results from a pilot Phare project on the development of 2 Regional Education and Examination Centres should demonstrate the need to develop such a project. It is also necessary to reinforce the management capacities of the vocational education and training school administrators.

The Vocational Guidance and Counselling system needs to be developed to offer people all over the country a chance to enter the Labour Market in competitive occupational fields of their choice.

4.3 Qualifications and training methods

In order to make the Latvian system comparable with EU standards, the definition of National Occupational and Educational standards based on international classifications like ISCED and the development of an accreditation and quality assessment system are indispensable. These developments must take into account both initial and continuing vocational training and involve branches and teachers.

5. POSSIBLE PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE ASSISTANCE

- **Reinforce the legal framework for initial and continuing vocational education and training**

  Support should aim to identify options for financing initial and continuing vocational education and training, to develop an accountancy model based on EU accounting principles and to quantify the contribution of enterprises in the development of the vocational education and training system.

  Support should also aim to integrate the development of continuing vocational education and training committing the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Welfare to find a common system for sharing resources and competencies.

- **Develop a research network on vocational education and training**

  In-depth studies on vocational education and training are missing in Latvia.

  Specific support should aim to identify adequate institutions and fields of research, and launch the most urgent studies.

- **Set up social partner involvement**

  The new law on vocational education and training should clarify the role of the social partners in its management.

  Specific support should aim to develop the core skills of trade union representatives and employers. Training and placement sessions should make them aware of policy formulation and tripartite discussion.

- **Restructure the rural network of vocational education and training schools as "integrated institutions"**

  Reinforcement of the role of rural vocational education and training schools appears indispensable.

  Support should aim to develop a rural schools project in order to respond to all issues regarding initial and continuing vocational training, to offer guidance services for the unemployed and students, and support to the regional and local SMEs. The role of different bodies (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Welfare, Adult Education Centres and also several institutional bodies dealing with training and unemployment problems) involved in the field must be clarified.

- **Set-up a national guidance and counselling system**

  A systematic guidance and counselling system for young people must be developed throughout the country to ensure the right of individuals to be informed.

  Support should aim at supporting bilateral co-operation through for example, study visits and at analysing different EU systems and defining a legal framework for the development of a complete and coherent system.

- **Develop a national standards system based on EU countries**

  The development of a national training standards organisation is a priority.

  Support should aim at supporting bilateral co-operation with study visits and an analysis of different systems in the EU. The role of the present Professional Education Centre (PIC) also needs to be reinforced.

Annexes

1. **Key Indicators**
2. **Diagram of the vocational education and training system**
3. **Legislative Framework**
4. **Responsible bodies**
5. **International Assistance**

ANNEX 1

Key indicators[3]

Indicators	1995				1996			
A. Access and Participation								
1. Participation in education and training of 16 year olds	n.a.				87.5%			
of which in vocational education and training	n.a.				34.7%			
2. Participation in education and training of 18 year olds	n.a.				54.5%			
of which in vocational education and training	n.a.				43.5%			
3. Relative importance of vocational education and trainingin secondary education (in terms of enrolment)								
Total	52.8%				47.1%			
Males	62.6%				56.1%			
Females	44.4%				39.6%			
4. Educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7		
Total				15.1%	68%	16.9%		
Males				16.7%	68.1%	15.2%		
Females				15.1%	68%	16.9%		
(25-30 years old)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.					
Total				7.3%	78.2%	14.5%		
Males				8.7%	79.4%	11.9%		
Females				5.7%	77%	17.3%		
B. Finance								
5. Public Expenditure on Education as percentage of GDP	7%				n.a.			
6. Public Expenditure on vocational education and trainingas percentage of GDP	0.5%				0.77% *			
C. Labour Market Trends								
7. Number of employed	1.045.000				1.017.700			
8. Unemployment rates								
Total	7.2%				7.66%			
Younger than 25	9.4%				11.1%			
Older than 25	6.6%				7.13%			
9. Unemployment rates by educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old)	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7		
Total	10.92%	7.04%	2.46%	12.17%	7.90%	2.72%		
Males	10.87%	5.70%	1.78%	12.05%	6.18%	1.79%		
Females	10.95%	6.52%	3.02%	12.22%	9.82%	3.50%		

*est.

[3] Data provided by National Observatory

Diagram of vocational education and training system

This diagram represents the first stage in the ongoing development of a standard graphical model for vocational education and training systems. Future refinement may include the further alignment of terms, student enrolment and dropout figure, and local language terms.

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ANNEX 3

Legislative Framework

EDUCATION

Laws on education and other legislative acts as well as the State budget are decided on by *Saeima* (Parliament). Rules, regulations etc. of nation-wide importance are decided on by the *Cabinet of Ministers* after approval by the appropriate commissions in the Cabinet.

A decision by the Cabinet of Ministers is needed in order to open a new state-funded higher, technical or vocational education institution.

The Education law adopted in 1991 regulates the educational system as a whole, determines the rights and duties of the state, municipal governments, public organisations, professional corporations and associations, private people, educational institutions, parents, pupils, students as well as determining the types of education and educational institutions. It was created as a legal framework with a series of laws regulating individual types of education.

Legislative acts in the framework of the Education Law are by-laws, statutes and template statutes.

Licensing regulations determine the order of issuing a licence to begin entrepreneurial activities related to education. *Accreditation regulations* determine the order according to which an educational institution is evaluated prior to being awarded the right to issue state-recognised education documents.

A Law on Higher Education establishments was adopted in 1995. It defines higher education and distinguishes the different types of higher education establishments.

This law also allows for the establishment of Colleges offering professional education.

Social protection and social policy

In 1995 several new laws were adopted which cover all aspects of social protection.

The umbrella law is the "Law of Social Security" which formulates the general principles of social protection in the state.

Other laws are:

the Labour Law which determines the rights of young people, disabled persons, women with small children, persons of pre-retirement age etc.

The Law on Social Assistance stipulates that the state is responsible for institutions helping the blind, deaf and mentally ill. The municipalities take care of institutions for elderly people and orphanages.

Law on State Pensions stipulates that pensions depend on the level of contributions which have been made . The retirement age for both women and men is 60 and the minimum working period is 10 years.

ANNEX 4

Responsible Bodies

With regard to initial vocational education and training training in Latvia, the 1991 Education Act defines the division of competences for determining vocational education curricula.

The Ministry of Education:

1. carries out state policy on education
2. elaborates regulations, by-laws, guidelines which are binding to all education institutions in Latvia
3. is responsible for legislation concerning all professional training institutions
4. rationalises state funding allocated to education and oversees the financial activities of the educational institutions under its supervision;
5. determines and co-ordinates the general education requirements for vocational and technical schools (programmes and curricula)
6. concludes agreements on co-operation in the education sphere with other states and organises their fulfillment
7. determines the contents and order for teacher training; the regulations for certification; issues certificates for pedagogical work at pre-school, general, vocational and special secondary education institutions
8. elaborates the template statutes for the educational institutions and approves the statutes of those educational institutions that are under its supervision
9. issues licences for opening educational institutions and for changing their profile or status according to the Law of Entrepreneurial Activities of LR.

Other ministries (Agriculture, Welfare, Culture) for the schools under their authority:

1. create legal documents which regulate issues specific to these schools
2. define the government requirement levels in vocational education
3. allocate state financing to the appropriate educational institutions and oversee their financial activities
4. carry out administration of educational institutions in the appropriate fields
5. elaborate and approve curriculum standards for professional subjects and set the guidelines for special subjects

6. establish (according to the regulations laid down in the law) educational institutions and elaborate and approve their statutes.

Furthermore, all ministries which administrate vocational education and training institutions, approve the admission plans, determine admission time and number of students to be admitted into each programme as well as the general admission regulations and harmonise the proportion of general and specialised education in the curricula with the Ministry of Education and Science.

Several education-support institutions have been formed in Latvia such as Professional Education Centres (PIC) at ministries of Education and Science, Culture, Welfare and Agriculture, Regional Education and Examinations Centre, Foundation for the Support of Further Education for teachers.

With regard to continuing vocational education and training,

The Ministry of Education through its Continuing Education Department:

1. sets up regulations on continuing training
2. establishes and finances the 23 regional Adult Education Centres
3. defines their functions
4. supports their activities

The Ministry of Welfare's State Employment Service

1. works in unemployment registration and organises training and re-qualification
2. assists people in search of employment
3. helps to orientate people in the labour market.

The Latvian Adult Education Association, a non -profit organisation established in 1993 both by the Ministry of Education and Science and the German Folk High School Association's Institute,

1. supports the Regional Adult Education Centres
2. organises seminars, training courses, study tours
3. collects and prepares materials on adult learning
4. prepares radio and TV programmes on continuing training.

ANNEX 5

International Assistance

Vocational education and training Phare Programmes

Vocational education and training reform (LE9408) 1994-97

- curricula revision; teacher training; equipment upgrading in 18 pilot schools; policy development; development of a national framework in vocational education and training
- **1994: 3.0 MECU**

These programmes are aimed at enabling the vocational education and training system to train people with skills which will equip them to manage the rapidly changing economic conditions in Latvia. To achieve this it supports: curriculum development for 10 occupational fields/occupations and 5 general subjects; teacher training and the upgrading of learning materials; partnerships with EU schools and policy development in the vocational education and training area. 18 pilot schools are involved. The programme also promotes national policy initiatives which have led to discussions on the relationship between the education system and the economy.

Business Education Reform (LE9502.06) 1995-98

- development of a coherent business education system by introducing college and adult education programmes in at least 5 selected pilot schools
- development of curricula and learning materials, upgrading of equipment and the training of teachers, administrators and school principals.
- **1995: 1.0 MECU**

Phare Higher Vocational Education Reform programme (LE9609)

- supports the development and implementation of a national strategy for secondary and tertiary vocational education, including in particular the modernisation and reform of the higher vocational education and training system
- completion of new curricula for the Phare 1994 pilot schools, development of a strategy for higher vocational education, development of national occupational and educational standards, strengthening the vocational education and training support institutions, improvement of practice-oriented vocational education through the development of pilot Regional Education and Examination Centres, and development of regional vocational education and training networks.
- **1996: 1.5 MECU**

Tempus

Other activities

- Baltic Conference on "Vocational Education and Training - The Importance of European Co-operation", Tallinn, 22-23 April 1996;
- Baltic Vocational Education and Training Policy Advisors' workshop, Turin, 17-21 February 1997.

Leonardo da Vinci programme - preparatory measures

Measures to support the preparation for participation in the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

Output: country dossiers, thematic conferences, support for partnership-building

Budget: 67,500 ECU from Commission Agreement no. 96-ETFO-LEO-0005

Other EU activities

The following Phare programmes include education and training components:

- Phare Multi-country Distance Education and Higher Education programmes
- Phare 1996 other sector programmes.

Other donor contribution

In 1996 the following projects were internationally funded in Latvia:

- Assistance of the federal republic of Germany in the establishing and staff training of the professional education centres (PIC) for 29,920Ls
- Joint project Latvia/Denmark "Formation of a business education network in Latvia" for 926,503 Ls (Latvia input 59,803Ls)
- Joint project Latvia/Denmark "Creation of a system of teacher training for vocational education and training in Latvia" for 7,914 Ls
- Joint project Latvia/Germany "Creation of a training Center of metal technology in Latvia" for 35,233 Ls (Latvia input 5,403Ls)
- Joint project Latvia /Germany "Improvement of education in commerce at the secondary education stage for 56,774 Ls (Latvia input 5,894Ls)
- Joint project Latvia/Canada "Creation of a system for unemployed retraining and adult upgrading" for 3,806Ls

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